

I oppose loosening the rules designed to promote and protect diversity of media ownership. These rules were adopted to ensure that the public would receive a diverse range of viewpoints from the media, and not simply the opinions of a handful of media conglomerates. The newspaper/broadcast

cross-ownership cap is a crucial element of our democratic media, and it should not be weakened.

I, for one among many, am appalled by many of the decisions that the Bush Administration is even CONSIDERING following through on, among them, drilling in the arctic refuge and the weakening of environmental standards in the name of 'free' trade. The issue of media diversity, however, is ultimately the most important factor in a true democracy. For everyone to have a voice, as is the basis of true democracy, all voices need an outlet that is accessible to the people as a whole. The fact that the majority of the media is controlled by so few as it is an injustice in itself. Airtime in a true democracy cannot be owned, only shared FREELY. Information dissemination cannot be sold to the highest bidder.

I urge you to please, for the sake of the people who are entrusting you, to entrust the people with an open media, free of conglomerates and media monopolies. Once again, this is crucial for a democracy to exist. We are the strongest, longest-lasting democracy to have ever existed in human history. Now is not the time to throw that away, but to strengthen it by giving people the power of their voices and an open market for their voices to be heard.

Sincerely and with hope for our nation,
Michael David Olson